

“She’d basically set the city’s agenda for the next six months.”
Jim Ross, political consultant, on why acting Mayor London Breed would be the favorite in a June mayoral election



Acting San Francisco Mayor London Breed (center) poses for photographs after meeting with members of the United Playaz, an organization promoting a gun buy-back program happening this weekend.

Breed paints herself as logical successor

Acting mayor likely to face crowd in quest to retain position as city’s leader

By Rachel Swan

London Breed’s eulogy to San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee, delivered on a second-floor balcony in City Hall just hours after the mayor’s death on Tuesday, was in many senses a coming-out address.

“Like me, Ed Lee grew up in public housing,” said Breed, setting up a working-class allegory in which she deftly compared herself to the late mayor.

Breed, who is president of the Board of Supervisors, had vaulted overnight into the role of acting mayor, which she may hold until the June 5 election. The unexpected turn of events seemed to bolster her standing in what could be a crowded race to fill the remaining two years of Lee’s term. If she wins in June, she could hold San Francisco’s top job for 10 years by finishing the last two years

Mayor continues on A10

Other possible candidates

Several politicians with S.F. ties might run for mayor:

			
David Chiu State assemblyman, former S.F. Board of Supervisors president	Mark Farrell District Two supervisor, corporate attorney and venture capitalist	Jane Kim District Six supervisor, lawyer and former Board of Education president	Mark Leno Former state senator, state assemblyman and District Eight supervisor

Public services announced

Friday: Mayor Ed Lee will lie in state from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. in the City Hall rotunda

Sunday: A memorial celebration will be held at 3 p.m. in the City Hall rotunda

» **Inside:** How to view Ed Lee’s casket, attend memorial service for late mayor at City Hall. **A11**

Tax bill deal near, say GOP leaders

California finance chief warns that many in state face higher payments

By Carolyn Lochhead

WASHINGTON — Republican congressional leaders said Wednesday they have a tentative agreement on a \$1.5 trillion tax overhaul that President Trump heralded in an afternoon national address as “a giant tax cut for Christmas,” but one that could raise taxes on many Californians.

The director of the California Department of Finance, Michael Cohen, issued a three-page letter to the California congressional delegation warning that the legislation would fail to produce the growth Republicans are expecting, harm middle-class taxpayers by limiting their ability to deduct state and local taxes and “jeopardize thousands of jobs” in clean energy by eliminating the tax credit for electric vehicles, among other things.

Desperate for their first legislative victory of the Trump presidency, Republicans in Congress continued their headlong drive to pass the tax package before Christmas, saying they hoped for final passage in the Senate and House next week, with the Senate voting as early as Tuesday.

But very few details were released Wednesday on the deal reached to reconcile the House tax package that passed in November and the Senate version approved this month. Republicans said the final bill will be made public Friday. California Republicans by and large declined comment until they see the final bill.

Taxes continues on A11

UCSF fired harassment office chief after probe

By Nanette Asimov

UCSF fired the head of its sexual harassment prevention office last spring after determining that she ordered an employee to falsify dates on complaints to make it appear that they were handled more efficiently, The Chronicle has learned.

The medical school confirmed that it fired Cristina Perez-Abelson in April after an investigation prompted by a whistle-blower found she also had instructed her staff to hide files from an auditor. She had been on paid leave since June 2016, according to the investigator’s report obtained through the California Public Records Act.

Perez-Abelson denied the findings and called the investigation process inadequate. In an interview, she painted a picture of an office overwhelmed by rising numbers of sexual harassment complaints, too few employees, and poor guidance from University of California headquarters on such key questions as when the official start date of a complaint should be.

UCSF said it had fired Perez-Abelson “for serious misconduct that included instructing her subordinates to withhold files from an auditor, falsify dates on case files in her office and back-

UCSF continues on A11

Fight to ease homelessness goes on



Mayor Ed Lee (center) with White House official Denis McDonough (center right) and city official Trent Rhorer (right) at a homeless count.

By Kevin Fagan

For all the continued anguish over needles, filth, begging and camping in the streets of San Francisco, there is one thing virtually every homeless-policy leader in the nation agrees upon: The late Mayor Ed Lee pushed hard, and he made progress on fixing the problem.

But not enough, say many of those who live or walk alongside the sprawling tent cities in the Mission, the Tenderloin and every other major camping spot.

Still, a look at the novel programs Lee created and the thousands of homeless people his efforts housed shows that he definitely made headway on the issue. And if the plans he put into motion work as predicted, the street problem may not be

Homeless continues on A10

Sierra peaks grew an inch during drought

By Kurtis Alexander

California’s already towering Sierra Nevada summits rose to new heights during the drought, albeit by just a hair.

A study by NASA scientists published Wednesday found that the granite peaks of the 400-mile range were pushed nearly an inch upward between 2011 and 2015, a phenomenon linked not only to known tectonic forces but the expansion of the land as it

dried out and shed water weight.

The findings suggest that a lot more water lies deep inside the rock of the Sierra than previously thought. The water is sneaking in and out through cracks in the ground, enough so that even the elevation of the biggest mountains are changing — including the lower 48 states’ tallest peak.

“Yeah, you could say Mount Whitney is at its highest,” said research scientist Donald Argus of NASA’s Jet Pro-

pulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, who led the study. “Although it’s only a little bit higher, of course.”

Previous studies have noted the Sierra’s uplift, a process that’s been hoisting the range for millions of years. But none has recognized such a large contribution from water loss.

Other studies have shown that the floor of the Central Valley sank rapidly during the historic drought, with nearly 2 inches lost in the

worst months in some places as desperate farmers pumped out the groundwater beneath them.

California’s reputation as a state of extremes may be more true than ever.

The NASA team found that the rebounding of the mountains as water moved out accounted for 71 percent of the Sierra’s 0.94-inch rise during the height of the drought between October 2011 and October 2015.

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Weather

Mostly sunny.
Highs: 61-74.
Lows: 36-49.

B10

